



Dedication of the O'Callaghan-Tillman Memorial Bridge

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer
Thursday, October 14, 2010

It is an honor to be with the O'Callaghan and Tillman families, as we dedicate this amazing Bridge in the name of Michael and Pat.

Today, we celebrate the individuals, agencies, policy-makers, companies and partnerships that have made the Michael O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman Bridge possible.

Let me take this opportunity to note that it was the late Arizona Congressman Bob Stump who was the first relentless warrior for this project – bringing all interested parties together in 1996, to start the wheels in motion.

As we pay tribute to the strength and beauty – of the bridge -- the achievement of years of planning and awesome feats of construction – I'd like to acknowledge the work of General Superintendent Bobby Carothers, and Structure Superintendent Curt Devereaux, who were responsible for construction of the Arizona Approach bridges.

Let us not forget that this bridge was ultimately built with HUMAN hands – hands like those of journeymen carpenters from the Navajo nation -- David Slick -- Alden and Chris Charley -- Lester Yazzie -- Delbert and Dennis Bitsui -- who provided the skills necessary to form, pour, and construct the Arizona Approach bridges.

And, let us not forget it was built with the hands of people like Jamie Ruman, who operated the cranes and the equipment that moved steel and concrete with precision.

Since September 11, 2001, commercial truck traffic has been restricted from crossing Hoover Dam, severing an important commerce link in the western United States.

This bridge will restore the freedom to move commercial traffic – saving both time and money.

It also becomes a crucial part of a possible future interstate between Phoenix and Las Vegas – the “I-11” transportation corridor connecting Phoenix and Las Vegas, two of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country -- promoting commerce, tourism and trade across the western U.S.

Through transportation corridors such as “I-11,” we can make strategic investments that leverage public and private funds, and position Arizona to diversify its economy, enhance its quality of life and compete globally in the 21st Century.

May God bless this bridge and the men and women who built it.

And may we always hold high the memory of the heroes for whom it is named.

Thank you.